Matthew 9

35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36. But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

37. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;

38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Sent #6 – Jesus Prayer Request
Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus, sent from the Father to rescue and redeem the lost, was on His journey to the cross. Every **stop**, every incident, every **word that was recorded and preserved gives us insight**. They are little windows through which He helps us see and learn…

- **Who He Is**
- **What He Can Do**
- ***Not just history – but His Story – eternal truth for us, today.***

We step into another moment of His ministry today in Matthew 9. Already…

- **A storm was stilled**… - And they marveled – "*What manner of man is this*"
- **Two bound and broken with demon possession were set free and restored to their right minds**
- **A lame man was healed and sins forgiven** and **left the pages of Scripture walking! Probably skipping!**
- A tax collector (***named Matthew***!), notorious and dismissed as corrupt and irredeemable, "Scum" according to some translations, was **called and became a follower of Jesus.**
- A **ruler named Jairius**, **desperate and out of options**, came to Jesus seeking healing for **his little girl**. A parent's worst nightmare became real – **his little girl died.** Those gathered around – family, religious leaders - laughed at his desperation and scorned Jesus, but **a little girl woke up, rose up, and that family moved on, alive, together, rejoicing.**
- A woman who had struggled with an infirmity for 12 years **touched the hem of His garment and was healed.**
- **Two blind men cried for mercy**, and were able **to see for the first time**.
- A **man couldn't speak**. His malady was both physical and spiritual. Matthew records – "*And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "**Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel**.""* Matthew 9:33

A parade of miracles…

Then**, inspiration pauses the breathless account of activity and provides us the words we have before us. It's a pause that invites us to the holy heart of the Savior.**

Jesus takes a moment, shares what He sees, and then **makes a personal prayer request.** Though He prayed often, and taught His disciples to pray, **it is actually *the only recorded instance of Jesus sharing a personal prayer request.***

If today, our Savior walked among us, looked you in the eyes, and asked you to pray for something that meant everything to Him, would you?

Let's see what God has waiting for us in the pause… Notice first,

I. Vs. 35 – Jesus Served…

A. His Service: **The miracles continued** – Every manner of sickness and disease!

B. His Sermon: - From the synagogues to the cities and villages - **The gospel of the kingdom**

- **Caution**: There is a tendency to see a word and always it assumes it means the same thing.
- **Clarification:** "Gospel" is always "***euangelion***" – "*Good news*".
- Contrast: **In our text…**
  Jesus was specifically **not preaching His death, burial and resurrection – the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** **It hadn't happened yet.**

  He was preaching the "**gospel of the kingdom**"
  - The King had come.
  - The kingdom was at hand.
  - Every miracle was a glimpse of what His reign would ultimately make right.

  Jesus, one by one, was **defeating the consequences of sin before their eye**s. Like calling cards, **each miracle just a sample of what was comin**g. **The greatest problem was not the multitude of sicknesses and diseases… It was the source of all human suffering: Sin.**

  Jesus, miracle by miracle, person by person, was **providing glimpses of an answer for all problems for all men!**

It would cost Him everything; It would be the ultimate answer for every one

II. Vs. 36 – Jesus saw - His Heart.

A. Jesus saw…

- **The "multitudes"** –
  It reminds me of the inscription on the Statue of Liberty –
  Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free

- **The many "ones" in the multitude**.
  They weren't lost in the crowd; they were seen, and loved, by Jesus.
  Just as each of us is seen and loved by Him today….

B. Jesus was moved with compassion…

"moved with compassion" – One Greek word.
"*to be moved to the depths of one's bowels, insides*"

C. Jesus explained:

"*because they fainted*"

Fainted: "*Exhausted… At the end of their strength…*"

Some texts – another word completely – *mangled, harassed, flayed…*

"*and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.*"

A multitude milling, **going nowhere, lost in plain sight**

Sheep having no shepherd –

Defenseless, Helpless, Hopeless.

A reflection of Isaiah's description: "All we like sheep have gone astray"

Then, from a heart broken with compassion, He turned to His disciples…

III. Vs. 37-38 – Jesus said - *"Pray ye…"*

- **He shared His heart.**
- **His request**

A. "The harvest truly is plenteous…"

1. The harvest:

They thought of wheat fields; He spoke of the world.

- Men, women boys girls.
- Grammas. Grampas. Real nice people. Real nasty people.
- All have sinned.
- All are lost.
- All are without hope and God in this world. (Ephesians 2)
- All need a Savior!

"***The world***" – John 3:16-18

- Every "one" seen.
- Every "one" loved.
- Every one lost and in need of Salvation!

2. The hour - ***It is the time for harvest.***

John 4:35 (ESV)

> **Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, then comes the harvest'? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.**

Jesus was not referencing something far off in the future…

Something that could be put off or ignored.

Not some future season. "Now!".

As Paul would later remind us, in 2 Corinthians 6:2

> "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Growing up as a child there was a song that God used to haunt me, convict me, make me aware of my need for Him:

> 1. O do not let the word depart,
> And close thine eyes against the light;
> Poor sinner, harden not your heart;
> Be saved, O tonight.
> 2 Tomorrow's sun may never rise
> To bless thy long deluded sight;

This is the time, O then be wise,
Be saved, O tonight. [Refrain]
Refrain:
O why not tonight?
O why not tonight?
Wilt thou be saved?
Then why not tonight?

- **There is crisis.**
- **There is an urgency.**

B. "*but the labourers are few*"

The problem:

Jesus continued the metaphor.

There was a big problem: Harvest is here. The fruit is just a little longer. Rejoicing is in sight.

But – Disaster: No one to work the fields. No one to bring is a ripe and ready harvest!

- **Jesus was doing His part.**
- **Jesus would do what no one else could do! The Cross was His destination…**

The harvest was ready. The need was for workers in the field.

C. "*Pray ye…*" – Jesus' prayer request:

- ***Who?* – We, His disciples are asked to pray…**
- ***To Whom Are We To Pray: The Lord of the Harvest*!**
- **What Are we to pray?**

"*send forth laborers into the harvest*"

Greek word: Drive out, Thrust out – (As demons!)

Several weeks ago we began "SENT" in John 17 – Jesus told us, "As the Father sent me… so send I you".

"Go…"

"Ye shall be witnesses unto me"

In the upper room that night before He died, Jesus told them – us –

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do;"

Can you imagine, the response of the angels as Jesus paid the price to redeem every person – the world! And left the message of the gospel with… us?

That's what He did. This is what He asked us to pray.
So, what do we learn in this holy pause? I guess that depends on where we are in His story…

1. Are we in the searching multitude… at our wits end… lost… desperately needing s Savior?

He sees… knows… loves… and is your answer today!

This is the time Oh then be wise,
Be saved oh tonight.

2. For those saved, following Jesus, seeking for Him to live in and through us,

- **Do we see what He sees?**
- **Do we care about what He cares about?**
- **Is our heart broken, as His was?**
- **Do we really believe that Jesus is the answer?!**

3. Will we do as He asked – Will we pray…?

Are we praying? Are we

- Bothered?
- Burdened?
- Broken?!

For someone? Anyone?

Maybe today, as He moves within us, we will as He be moved with compassion!

- For them!
- For Him! He asked us… He trusted us… He….

And the world, our world, and the world of someone we love and He loves, will be changed forever!